



EARLY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT STUDY

AGENCY REPORT
SUMMARY STATISTICS FROM ALL SITES



ADOPTIVE PARENT RECRUITMENT

Adoptive parent recruitment began at one month post-placement. The adoptive family received a study brochure and a letter from their adoption agency explaining the details of the Early Growth and Development Study. If the adoptive family was not interested in learning more about the study, they were asked to return a self-addressed and stamped postcard to the study. If the study did not receive a postcard from the adoptive family after one month, the study attempted to recruit one of the birth parents. After one birth parent had been successfully recruited, a different recruiter from the study contacted the adoptive family. If the adoptive parent was interested in participating, they were sent information about the study and a set of Informed Consent forms. Once the Informed Consent forms were signed by the adoptive parents, they began their participation in the study. Across the United States, 1,796 letters were mailed to potential adoptive families, of which 324 families returned a postcard indicating that they did not wish to receive any information from the study. In total, we attempted to recruit over 500 adoptive families and 359 adoptive families agreed to participate.

ADOPTIVE PARENT DATA COLLECTION

Adoptive families were asked to complete three in-person visits with the Early Growth and Development Study. On average, the visits occurred when the child was 9, 16 and 27 months old. Adoptive parents completed a booklet of mailed questions prior to each in-person visit. An interviewer from the Early Growth and Development Study met with the adoptive family in their home at a time that was most convenient for the family and the child. The 9 and 27 month old visits lasted 3 hours, while the 16 month visit lasted 90 minutes. During the visits, the adoptive family completed a variety of activities and tasks. Some of these activities included the child and the interviewer, while the adoptive parents completed computer-assisted questionnaires on their own. Other tasks involved the adoptive mother and child, the adoptive father and the child, or all three members of the family. The adoptive family was compensated \$100 for their time and efforts completing each booklet of questions and each in-person visit. The child also received a toy at each visit.

Adoptive parents also completed a brief phone interview when the child was 6, 12, 22, and 36 months old. The phone interviews provided our staff with the opportunity to stay in touch with the adoptive family before and in-between the in-person visits.

ADOPTIVE PARENT DATA

The data that is presented in the following report was primarily collected from adoptive parents during the first in-person interview. There are also some data that were collected during the 6 month phone interview. This data set includes responses from 352 adoptive mothers (**presented in red font**) and 344 adoptive fathers (**represented in blue font**). We have included the descriptive statistics for all questions related to the adoption process.

ADOPTIVE FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS

Age

(Range = **25–54/26–60**; Mean = **38/39**)

1%	0%	Less than 25 Years Old
6%	5%	26–29
19%	19%	30–34
32%	34%	35–39

31%	26%	40–44
10%	11%	45–49
1%	5%	More than 50

Race

1%	0%	American Indian/Alaska Native
1%	0%	Asian
0%	1%	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
4%	7%	Black or African American
90%	89%	White
2%	0%	More than one race
2%	3%	White <u>and</u> Hispanic or Latino

Marital status

1%	1%	Single, never married
0%	0%	Single, widowed
84%	86%	Married
0%	0%	Married, but separated
1%	0%	Divorced, not married
9%	9%	Remarried
5%	4%	Living in a committed, marriage-like relationship

Length of marriage

(Range = 2–27; Mean = 12)

8%	—	Less than 5 Years
30%	—	5–9 Years
37%	—	10–14 Years
16%	—	15–19 Years
7%	—	20–24 Years
2%	—	25 Years or More

ADOPTIVE PARENTS’ RELATIONSHIP WITH BIRTH PARENTS

How open would you describe the adoption? (Describes the current level of openness.)

0%	0%	Very closed: you have no information about the birth parents
6%	7%	Closed: you only have general information about the birth parents that the agency provided
19%	18%	Semi open: all communication with the birth parents is through an agency
15%	14%	Moderately open: you exchange letters/emails, cards, pictures, but have no face-to-face contact with the birth parents
40%	40%	Open: you have 1-3 visits per year and communicate semi-regularly by phone, letters or emails with the birth parents
13%	13%	Quite open: you have visits with the birth parents about every other month and communicate often by phone, letters or emails
7%	8%	Very open: you have visits with the birth parents at least once a month and communicate several times a month by phone, letters or emails

How much choice did you have regarding the level of openness?

8%	10%	Agency has a pre-established policy on the level of openness
16%	13%	The birth parent decided
5%	8%	Adoptive family decided
71%	69%	Adoptive family had some choice, negotiated with birth parents and/or agency regarding level of openness

If the agency has a pre-established policy on the level of openness, how similar or different was the agency’s policy regarding the level of openness from your own ideas?

4%	6%	Very different
35%	29%	A little different
42%	53%	About the same
19%	12%	Exactly the same

How satisfied are you with the level of openness of your adoption plan?

66% 69% Very Satisfied
 27% 27% Somewhat Satisfied
 6% 4% Somewhat Dissatisfied
 1% 0% Very Dissatisfied

If you could change the level of openness of this adoption, would you want this adoption to:

12% 8% Be more closed, less contact with the birth parents
 69% 73% Remain the same
 19% 19% Be more open, more contact with the birth parents

Think about how often you are in contact with the birth mother. How often...	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
a. Do you send or give photos of your child?	3% 4%	49% 49%	44% 42%	3% 4%	1% 1%
b. Do you send her letters/emails about your child?	8% 10%	46% 50%	40% 35%	6% 5%	0% 0%
c. Do you talk on the phone with her?	42% 38%	33% 35%	16% 18%	8% 8%	1% 1%
d. Do you have face-to-face contact with her?*	20% 22%	62% 61%	14% 11%	3% 4%	1% 2%
e. Does she send presents to your child?	52% 47%	45% 51%	3% 2%	0% 0%	0% 0%
f. Does she send letters/emails to you?	40% 38%	39% 46%	16% 14%	4% 2%	1% 0%

* This includes face-to-face contact that happened before the birth and face-to-face contact that occurred after the birth.

Think about your expectations of your relationship with the birth mother in the future. How often do you:	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
a. Plan on sending her pictures of your child?	3% 2%	65% 69%	31% 27%	1% 2%	0% 0%
b. Plan on writing letters/emails to her?	4% 6%	65% 68%	28% 24%	3% 2%	0% 0%
a. Plan on talking to her on the phone?	29% 25%	49% 50%	18% 21%	3% 4%	1% 0%
b. Plan on having face-to-face contact with her?	20% 21%	72% 70%	7% 8%	1% 1%	0% 0%
c. Expect to receive presents for your child from her?	45% 45%	54% 54%	1% 1%	0% 0%	0% 0%
d. Expect to receive letters/emails from her?	25% 21%	60% 67%	12% 11%	2% 1%	1% 0%

How satisfied are you with the amount contact that you have with the birth mother?

55% 55% Very satisfied
 32% 34% Somewhat satisfied
 11% 10% Somewhat dissatisfied
 2% 1% Very dissatisfied

Think about how often you are in contact with the birth father. How often...	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
a. Do you send or give photos of your child?	62% 62%	25% 27%	12% 10%	1% 1%	0% 0%
b. Do you send him letters/emails about your child?	68% 66%	22% 25%	9% 8%	1% 1%	0% 0%
c. Do you talk on the phone with him?	83% 81%	14% 16%	2% 2%	1% 1%	0% 0%
d. Do you have face-to-face contact with him?*	70% 70%	26% 26%	3% 2%	1% 1%	0% 1%
e. Does he send presents to your child?	90% 87%	9% 13%	1% 0%	0% 0%	0% 0%
f. Does he send letters/emails to you?	89% 86%	9% 12%	1% 2%	1% 0%	0% 0%

* This includes face-to-face contact that happened before the birth and face-to-face contact that occurred after the birth.

Think about your expectations of your relationship with the birth father in the future. How often do you:	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
a. Plan on sending him pictures of your child?	54% 53%	37% 39%	9% 7%	0% 1%	0% 0%
b. Plan on writing letters/emails to him?	57% 56%	36% 37%	6% 6%	1% 1%	0% 0%
c. Plan on talking to him on the phone?	73% 68%	24% 28%	3% 3%	0% 1%	0% 0%

d. Plan on having face-to-face contact with him?	64% 63%	34% 36%	2% 1%	0% 0%	0% 0%
e. Expect to receive presents for your child from him?	84% 82%	15% 18%	1% 0%	0% 0%	0% 0%
f. Expect to receive letters/emails from him?	76% 74%	22% 25%	2% 1%	0% 0%	0% 0%

How satisfied are you with the amount contact that you have with the birth father?

36% 41% Very satisfied
 25% 24% Somewhat satisfied
 28% 23% Somewhat dissatisfied
 11% 12% Very dissatisfied

ADOPTIVE PARENTS' EXPERIENCES WITH ADOPTION AGENCIES

In total, how many adoption agencies have you made contact with either by phone, e-mail, or by visiting in person?

Range = 1–50; Mean = 3.8

Range = 1–25; Mean = 3.3

Thinking of the agency you (most recently) used to make an adoption plan, did you select this agency because of:	Yes	No
a. The information you received about the adoption agency from a packet, their website or a meeting?	69% 64%	31% 36%
b. Other people's recommendation, word of mouth, or their reputation?	68% 69%	32% 31%
c. The agency's philosophy about adoption, including openness, and mission statement?	83% 81%	17% 19%
d. The geographic location of the agency?	53% 56%	47% 44%
e. Their agency staff?	50% 64%	50% 36%
f. The costs associated with completing an adoption plan?	33% 23%	67% 77%
g. Their religious affiliation?	33% 30%	67% 70%
h. Working with this agency in the past?	18% 18%	82% 82%
i. A phone book search?	9% 6%	91% 94%

Were there any other reasons that we have not described for your selecting the agency that you used?

59% 62% No
 41% 38% Yes

Thinking of the agency you (most recently) used to make an adoption, how satisfied were you with:	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	N/A
a. The information the agency provided about the adoption process?	74% 70%	22% 24%	3% 5%	1% 1%	— —
b. Their education and support services?	62% 63%	26% 25%	7% 11%	3% 1%	2% 0%
c. Their ability to make recommendations for outside services like counseling?	22% 29%	24% 35%	6% 2%	5% 2%	43% 32%
d. The staff's responsiveness to your requests?	61% 51%	27% 34%	9% 10%	3% 5%	— —
e. The skill of the staff?	66% 62%	26% 31%	5% 5%	3% 2%	— —
f. Their policy about openness?	86% 80%	12% 14%	1% 2%	1% 4%	— —
g. The home study process, including the length of time it took to complete it?	65% 53%	20% 32%	3% 6%	2% 2%	10% 7%
h. The matching process?	77% 76%	13% 22%	4% 1%	1% 1%	5% 0%
i. The placement process?	78% 72%	16% 22%	4% 3%	2% 3%	— —
j. The post placement services / supervision?	61% 52%	22% 35%	5% 4%	4% 1%	8% 8%

Does your agency offer education classes or workshops?

80% 83% Yes
 11% 10% No
 9% 7% Don't Know

If they were offered, did you use take any of the *education classes or workshops*?

72% 79% Yes
28% 21% No

When did you take the *education classes or workshops*?

83% 80% Pre-placement
3% 2% Post-placement
14% 18% Both

How satisfied were you with the *education classes or workshops*?

70% 66% Very satisfied
23% 27% Somewhat satisfied
6% 2% Somewhat dissatisfied
1% 5% Very dissatisfied

Does your agency offer *support groups*?

59% 73% Yes
23% 9% No
18% 18% Don't know

If they were offered, did you attend a *support group*?

37% 36% Yes
63% 64% No

When did you attend a *support group*?

35% 41% Pre-placement
17% 14% Post-placement
48% 45% Both

How satisfied were you with the *support groups*?

45% 59% Very satisfied
43% 32% Somewhat satisfied
9% 9% Somewhat dissatisfied
3% 0% Very dissatisfied

Does your agency offer *counseling services*?

58% 67% Yes
22% 15% No
20% 18% Don't know

If it was offered, did you use the *counseling services*?

24% 11% Yes
76% 89% No

When did you use the *counseling services*?

35% 33% Pre-placement
5% 17% Post-placement
60% 50% Both

How satisfied were you with the *counseling services*?

84% 50% Very satisfied
13% 50% Somewhat satisfied
3% 0% Somewhat dissatisfied
0% 0% Very dissatisfied

Does your agency offer *referrals for education or support services outside of the agency itself?*

46% 51% Yes
22% 20% No
32% 29% Don't know

If referrals were offered, did you use the *referrals for education or support services outside of the agency itself?*

35% 21% Yes
65% 79% No

When did you use the *referrals?*

51% 78% Pre-placement
23% 11% Post-placement
26% 11% Both

How satisfied were you with the *referrals?*

81% 44% Very satisfied
19% 33% Somewhat satisfied
0% 11% Somewhat dissatisfied
0% 11% Very dissatisfied

Does your agency offer *social activities to get to know staff or other families?*

78% 85% Yes
13% 9% No
9% 6% Don't know

If they were offered, did you attend any of the *social activities to get to know staff or other families?*

43% 45% Yes
57% 55% No

When did you attend these *social activities?*

29% 31% Pre-placement
28% 38% Post-placement
43% 31% Both

How satisfied were you with the *social activities?*

69% 72% Very satisfied
25% 28% Somewhat satisfied
6% 0% Somewhat dissatisfied
0% 0% Very dissatisfied

Did your agency send *newsletters, email updates, or post updates on a website?*

90% 92% Yes
7% 8% No
3% 0% Don't know

If they were offered, did you read the *newsletters, email updates, or updates on a website?*

97% 93% Yes
3% 7% No

When did you read the *newsletters, email updates, or updates on a website?*

12% 15% Pre-placement
7% 3% Post-placement
81% 82% Both

How satisfied were you with the *newsletters, email updates, updates on a website?*

67% 66% Very satisfied
32% 31% Somewhat satisfied
1% 0% Somewhat dissatisfied

0% 2% Very dissatisfied
0% 1% N/A

Did your agency offer other services that I have not mentioned?

10% 10% Don't know
70% 73% No
19% 17% Yes

How many post placement visits did your agency require of you before finalizing the adoption?

Range = 0–10; Mean = 3

Range = 0–7; Mean = 3

How many post placement visits have you received?

Range = 0–10; Mean = 3

Range = 0–7; Mean = 3

What service provided by the agency did you find most helpful? The more common answers included:

Information

6% 10% Educational classes
6% >1% The orientation workshop

Services

12% 4% The matching/placement

Support

8% 1% The adoptive parent liked the social worker/ counselor he/she worked with
7% 1% The availability and support of the adoption agency staff
4% 2% Counseling
5% >1% The mediation with the birth family was very helpful

Other

5% 2% Nothing

What service did you really wish your agency had provided?

Information

5% >1% The agency should have provided more/better education about the adoption process

Other

32% 13% None
6% 3% The adoptive parent would have liked the agency to have a closer office

What services did you seek from outside of the agency?

The most common answers were:

Services

19% 11% Legal services
7% >1% The adoptive parent sought a home study from a different agency

Other

28% 8% None

ADOPTIVE PARENTS PERSONAL EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE ADOPTION PROCESS

How many months did you think about adoption before deciding to pursue an adoption plan for the child who is participating in this study (approximate if you aren't exactly sure)?

Range = 0–240; Mean = 21

Range = 0–600; Mean = 24

How much does this statement reflect your reason for pursuing an adoption plan:	Not at all	A little bit	Pretty much	A lot
a. I always planned to adopt a child	43% 57%	30% 24%	10% 11%	17% 8%
b. I am or my partner was adopted	92% 92%	3% 3%	0% 2%	5% 3%
c. I have parents, friends or other family members who have adopted	42% 44%	36% 36%	9% 9%	13% 11%
d. I wanted to be a parent	3% 6%	3% 6%	9% 19%	85% 69%
e. My partner and/or I were recruited to become adoptive parents	96% 94%	3% 3%	1% 2%	0% 1%
f. My partner and/or I were unable to have a child biologically	10% 10%	12% 10%	11% 14%	67% 66%
g. I wanted to provide a home for a child who needs it	13% 12%	35% 34%	19% 22%	33% 32%
h. I (my spouse/romantic partner) did not want to be pregnant	84% 88%	9% 7%	3% 3%	4% /2%
i. I am concerned about over-population	73% 72%	21% 20%	3% 6%	3% 2%

Were there any other reasons that we have not described for you to pursue an adoption plan?

83% 81% No
17% 19% Yes

Have you ever attempted to have a child biologically?

91% 86% Yes
9% 14% No

Adoptive Mother(s) - Was conceiving or carrying a baby to term ever difficult for you?

Adoptive Father(s) - Was conceiving ever difficult for you?

89% 81% Yes
11% 19% No

Have you ever been diagnosed with a fertility issue, or been told by a doctor that it would be very difficult or unlikely for you to have a child biologically?

64% 35% Yes
36% 65% No

If yes, how old were you when this diagnosis was made?

Range = 15–45; Mean = 32

Range = 8–48; Mean = 34

Adoptive Mother - Was conceiving ever difficult for your partner?

Adoptive Father - Was conceiving or carrying a baby to term ever difficult for your partner?

50% 79% Yes
50% 21% No

Has your partner ever been diagnosed with a fertility issue, or been told by a doctor that it would be very difficult or unlikely to have a child biologically?

32% 63% Yes
68% 37% No

If yes, how old was your partner when this diagnosis was made?

Range = 11–48; Mean = 33

Range = 3–48; Mean = 33

When going through the adoption process, how satisfied were you with the amount of support you received from:	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	N/A
a. Your partner?	86% 92%	10% 6%	3% 1%	0% 0%	1% 1%
b. Your family?	59% 62%	33% 28%	6% 7%	1% 2%	1% 1%
c. Your close friends/neighbors?	76% 73%	21% 21%	2% 3%	0% 1%	1% 2%
d. Your counselor/therapist?	19% 20%	4% 6%	1% 1%	1% 1%	75% 72%

e. Your support group?	17% 18%	7% 9%	1% 1%	0% 0%	74% 72%
f. Your physician?	35% 31%	15% 13%	4% 4%	2% 1%	44% 51%
g. Your religious community/clergy?	37% 33%	10% 10%	1% 1%	1% 1%	51% 55%

Were there any other people that we have not described that provided you support when going through the adoption process?

86% 88% No
14% 12% Yes

<i>After adopting your child, how satisfied were you with the amount of support you received from:</i>	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	N/A
a. Your partner?	92% 95%	5% 5%	1% 0%	1% 0%	1% 0%
b. Your family?	82% 77%	14% 18%	4% 4%	0% 1%	0% 0%
c. Your close friends/neighbors?	87% 84%	9% 13%	2% 1%	1% 1%	1% 1%
d. Your counselor/therapist?	17% 18%	4% 4%	1% 1%	1% 0%	77% 77%
e. Your support group?	22% 23%	3% 6%	1% 0%	0% 0%	74% 71%
f. Your physician?	42% 41%	11% 12%	1% 1%	1% 0%	45% 46%
g. Your religious community/clergy?	46% 42%	6% 8%	2% 0%	1% 0%	45% 50%

Were there any other people that we have not described that provided you support after adopting your child?

85% 90% No
15% 10% Yes

<i>How has the adoption process affected:</i>	Improved a lot	Improved slightly	No change	Slightly worse	A lot worse	N/A
a. The quality of your relationship?	24% 32%	39% 39%	29% 24%	6% 5%	1% 0%	1% 0%
b. Your relationship with your other child(ren)?	5% 14%	17% 15%	19% 19%	3% 1%	1% 16%	55% 35%
c. Your mental or emotional health?	27% 18%	30% 30%	36% 46%	7% 5%	0% 1%	— —
d. Your physical health?	5% 3%	14% 9%	68% 75%	13% 12%	0% 1%	— —
e. Your relationship with your in-laws?	13% 10%	20% 28%	27% 59%	4% 1%	1% 1%	5% 1%
f. Your relationship with your parents?	11% 9%	31% 30%	54% 53%	1% 4%	1% 1%	2% 3%
g. Your friendships?	9% 7%	23% 19%	63% 70%	5% 3%	0% 1%	— —
h. Your general satisfaction with life?	58% 47%	31% 36%	10% 15%	1% 2%	0% 0%	— —
i. Your social life?	10% 7%	18% 15%	42% 46%	28% 29%	2% 3%	— —
j. Your career or professional life?	4% 5%	10% 12%	45% 68%	21% 13%	3% 1%	7% 1%

<i>Thinking about the child whom you recently adopted, how has the child affected:</i>	Improved a lot	Improved slightly	No change	Slightly worse	A lot worse	N/A
a. The quality of your relationship?	37% 44%	35% 34%	23% 18%	3% 3%	1% 0%	1% 1%
b. Your relationship with your other child(ren)?	10% 11%	16% 21%	18% 18%	5% 2%	0% 16%	51% 32%
c. Your mental or emotional health?	34% 20%	32% 38%	31% 38%	3% 4%	0% 0%	— —
d. Your physical health?	7% 5%	16% 12%	62% 68%	15% 14%	0% 1%	— —
e. Your relationship with your in-laws?	12% 8%	32% 38%	47% 52%	3% 1%	1% 0%	5% 1%
f. Your relationship with your parents?	13% 8%	32% 38%	51% 48%	1% 2%	1% 1%	2% 3%
g. Your friendships?	10% 7%	25% 20%	59% 69%	6% 4%	0% 0%	— —
h. Your general satisfaction with life?	60% 48%	31% 38%	8% 12%	1% 2%	0% 0%	— —
i. Your social life?	8% 5%	17% 14%	44% 46%	29% 33%	2% 2%	— —
j. Your career or professional life?	5% 3%	7% 12%	45% 68%	21% 14%	3% 1%	19% 2%

Looking back on the period of coming to the decision to adopt, completing an adoption plan, and adjusting to a new child in your home, what was the most difficult part of this process?

The Adoption Process

30% 18% Waiting for a child

- 6% 6% Coming to the decision to adopt
- 5% 4% The adoption process

Post-Placement Life Changes

- 5% 10% General adjustment to having a new child
- 4% 6% Dealing with the lack of sleep as a result of taking care of an infant

Other

- 4% 8% Coming to terms with infertility issues and the inability of the adoptive parents' to have a biological child

Looking back on the period of coming to the decision to adopt, completing an adoption plan, and adjusting to a new child in your home, what was the nicest or most important thing that someone did for you?

Emotional Support

- 25% 21% Support from friends and family
- 6% 13% The birth parent(s) chose us to raise their child

Material/Physical Support

- 11% 4% Friends/family threw a baby shower for the adoptive parents
- 6% 4% Friends and family provided meals for the adoptive parent(s)
- 5% 2% Friends and family helped to prepare the adoptive parents' home for the child
- 2% 5% People provided the adoptive family with financial help